THE POORE MANS ADVOCATE,

OR,

A Treatise of Liberality to the needy:

Delivered in SERMONS

By WILLIAM WHATELY

Minister of *Banbury*.

PROV. 19. 17.

He that hath pitty upon the poore, lendeth to the Lord; and that which hee hath given, will he pay him againe.

LONDON,

inted by *G. M* for *George Edwards*, and are to be sold at his house in Greene-Arbour, at the signe of the Angell 1627.

To all the Faithfull Servants of God that are rich in this world, the Author wiſheth treaſure in Heaven, and therefore dedicates this inſuing Treatiſe.

TO you, well-beloved in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, doth this ſmall Treatiſe offer it ſelfe, and hath ſhrunke it ſelfe into this little quantity, that hiding it ſelfe in a narrow roome,

it may accompany your purſes in your pockets, and ſo warne you to pull them forth more frequently and more willingly for mercifull deeds, then perhaps you have heretofore accuſtomed. Neither doth this little booke barely requeſt at your hands your conſtant practiſe of liberality towards your needy brethren, but doth even require it at your hands, as a thing abſolutely neceſſary to your ſalvation. It cites you before the tribunall of your owne conſciences, and

making

making evident proofe that your Lord and Maſter, whoſe ſtewards you are, hath commanded you to be plentifull in thoſe kinde of expences, doth as an advocate, demand and requeſt of the judge of that court, (even the conſcience of every one of you) to make and regiſter a firme order and decree (if it will ſhew it ſelfe a juſt and righteous judge) that from henceforth you ſhall be large and abundant and forward and ready to this good work ſo often as occaſion ſhall offer

offer it ſelfe, yea that you ſhall ſtudiouſly ſeeke after all occaſions to do it as often as may be. No man can be ſaved without good workes, more then without faith, becauſe that faith is not lively which produceth not good workes, and chiefely thoſe good workes that do ſpecially pertaine to every mans ſtate of life, as this doth to the ſtate of wealthy Chriſtians. He that reſolveth not to obey God in doing every good thing required at his hand, is no more upright, then

then hee that reſolveth not to obey, in leaving every wicked thing prohibited. Many thinke themſelves ſound, if they purpoſe to caſt off every knowne evill deed, though they ſettle not in themſelves, a like firme determination to performe every knowne duty. But herein they beguile themſelves. He caſts not from him all his tranſgreſſions, nor hath reſpect to all Gods commandements, that caſts not from him faults of omiſſion, and endeavoureth not to put in practiſe

affirmative precepts. Gods authority muſt be no leſſe ſubmitted unto, when hee requireth a thing, then when he prohibiteth, when he ſaith this doe, then when hee ſaith, this doe not. So hollowneſſe appeares as much, in not doing the one, as in doing the other. Yea careleſnes & unwillingneſſe to know good duties argues guile of heart, as well as careleſneſſe or unwillingnes to doe what wee have knowne. That you may therfore approve the ſincerity of your ſoules in the

the working of mercy & bounty, as well as other vertues, I have here declared unto you the neceſſity therof; And ſo beſeeching you to reade what followeth, with a will to be convinced and to practiſe, & beſeeching the Lord, to teach and perſwade your ſoules, in this matter, I commend you to his favourable guidance, and ſhall reſt ever

April 27. 1637.

Studious of your ſpirituall wellfare,

WILLIAM WHATELY.

To the mercifull Christians inhabiting in or about *Banbury*.

ALmes *in Greek comes from a word that signifieth to pitty, because all our* almes *should proceed from a mercifull and pittifull heart, in the Hebrew* * *and Syriack tongue it is called* righteousnesse, *as if it were by right due to the poore.* Withhold not thy good

Ἐλεημοσυνη whence the Latine *Eleemosyna* French *Aulmosne.* English *Almes ab* Ἐλεέω *misereor.*

* צדקה

Pro. 3. 27.

good from the owners thereof, *ſo the originall runs*. To him that ſoweth righteouſneſſe, ſhall be a ſure reward. *Therefore hath the Author of this enſuing Treatiſe by demonſtrative arguments prooved the neceſsity of this duty, and fully anſwered the ſophiſmes and ſeeming objections which the wrangling wit of man will be ready to invent and urge againſt its performance. Hee hath laid downe likewiſe certaine rules to direct men how rightly to give, preſcribed meanes to inable them, and added motives alſo*

Pro. 11. 18

also to quicken them to this laudable worke. And as hee most frequently and earnestly presseth this duty upon the consciences of his hearers, so he shewes himselfe to them in this (as in all things,) a patterne of good works, *Tit.2.7. His holy life is a true counterpane of his doctrine, he hath a purse for the poore as he adviseth others to have, and giveth the tenth as he exhorts others to give. Well knowing, that it is the duty of a Minister that would bee found faithfull both* ὀρθοτομεῖν, 2 Tim.2.15. & ὀρθοποδεῖν, Gal. 2. 14. *to teach*

teach and to tread the way to Heaven. Thoſe things (*ſaith the Apoſtle*) which yee have both learned and received, and heard and ſeene in me, doe. Phil.4.9.

More might I ſay without either falſehood or flattery, but this will bee thought too much by him who thinkes ſo meanely of himſelfe, that this very Worke was almoſt extorted from him with importunate ſolicitations. The poore hee pleadeth for, are not ſuch as are ſtrong and able to labour for their living, but ſuch as are weake, impotent, and unable to take paines, and Eſay 58.7 Mat.26. 35,36.

there

there are three degrees of ſuch needie perſons. 1. Some are utterly deſtitute of all the meanes of preſervation of life, theſe we are bound (ſaith a Learned Divine) to relieve out of things neceſſary to our ſtate, ſince the life of our neighbour is more to be eſteemed then our outward ſtate. Others are in great need having but little to maintaine themſelves or theirs, we are bound to relieve theſe out of thoſe things which are neceſſary to the decency of our ſtate. A third ſort have ſomething, but yet not that which is ſufficient or competent,

Occurere eſt ſuccurrere.

petent, wee are bound to relieve them out of thoſe things which are ſuperfluous to the decency of our ſtate. For order of relieving, cœteris paribus, other things being equall, wee muſt relieve ſuch as are in greater neceſsity. Secondly, in the like neceſsity thoſe are to be preferred to which we owe moſt love, as thoſe that are neare to us in blood before thoſe that are farther of, Mat. 15.5,6. the poore of our owne familie, Deut 15.7
towne and countrey before ſtrangers, 1 Tim. 5.8. the houſhold of faith before the

the ungodly, Gal.6. 10. *This ſcattering* Prov.11. 24. *is increaſing, this is no ſpending but a* lending, *Pro.*19.17. *no laying out, but a* laying up. *It is a bleſſed thing thus to give*, Acts 20. 35. *the gift will prove more beneficiall to the giver then to the receiver, if thou giveſt a penny, the poore man gives thee a good prayer and bleſſeth thee in the name of God, of which* Iob *made great reckoning*, Iob 20. 13. & 31.20. And for this thing God will bleſſe thee in all thy workes, and

Luke 12. 33.

Plus pauper tibi confert quam à te accipit. Ambr.

Pro.22. 9

and in all that thou putſt thine hand unto, *Deut.* 15.10. *and bleſſe thy poſterity*, Pſal.37.26. *Our charitable actions aſcend up to bee a* memoriall *before God, or a ſtanding monument and remembrance, as the word ſignifieth, wee ſhall heare of them at the reſurrection*, Luke 14. 14. *God hath made many ample ſweete and precious promiſes to the mercifull, to reward them abundantly*, Pro.11. 25. Mat.10.41,42. Luke 6.38. Heb.6.10. *He hath promiſed Temporall bleſſings*, they ſhall not lacke,

Act.10.5. εἰς μνημόσυνον
Pro.11. 25.
Eccleſ.11 1.
Mat.5.7.
Heb.13. 16.
2 Cor.9. 6.

lacke, *Prov.* 28.27. They ſhall have comfort in ſickneſſe, and bee delivered in time of trouble, *Pſal.* 41.1,2,3. *Spirituall*, Breaking off of ſinnes *and* pardon, *Dan.* 4. 27. Perpetuity of righteouſneſſe, *Pſal.* 112. 9. *Eternall*, A certaine treaſure in heaven, *Luke* 13.33. Receiving into everlaſting tabernacles, *Luke* 16.9. Poſſeſſion of eternall life, *Mat.* 25.34. *Oh let us therefore* doe good, bee rich in good workes, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17.

Bene-

Beneficence to men is there expreſſed in the variety of foure Epithets, both to ſhew the vehement intention of Saint Pauls *deſire of good workes, and the important neceſsity of their performance, this if wee doe, wee may* lay hold on eternall life, *as hee there addes, may bee as ſure of it as if wee had it. Let us give then that which wee cannot keepe, that wee may gaine that which we cannot looſe.* Let us make to our ſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſſe, that when

Ver. 8.

Luke 16. 9.

when wee faile, they may receive us into everlasting habitations.

Your true Christian friend,

E. L.

Perlegi hunc tractatum in quo nihil reperio quò minùs cum utilitate imprimatur.

THO: WEEKES. R.P.

Epiſc. Lond. Cap. Domest.

THE POORE MANS ADVOCATE, OR A Treatiſe of Liberalitie to the needy.

PROV. 28. 27.

He that giveth unto the poore ſhall not lacke, but he that hideth his eyes, ſhall have many a curſe.

THis ſentence is left in GODS Booke to quic-

ken men unto a much neglected duty, for that end it delivers a promiſe and a threat; ſhewing in the former, what good ſhall come to them that are carefull of the duty, in the latter what evill ſhall befall the neglecters of it. In the promiſe note a duty ſtanding in an action, that is, *Giving*, and the object of the action, *to the poore*. Every man knows what it is to give, as giving is ſtrictly taken, *viz.* a beſtowing of a thing upon another of my owne free will, which

which hee cannot challenge of right otherwise. Now this giving is a thing much in use, but not to the right object here named, which are the *poore*. Much is given away to the Rich and those that need it not, as it were the powring of water into the Sea, but into the empty vessell nothing is powred; but the duty which God would commend, is that which hath for its object a poore needy distressed man, who is destitute of things necessary and

knowes not by what meanes to relieve himselfe.

A poore man is one that wants things needfull for him. But you must conceive, that here is not meant a scant, backward, niggardly giving, but a constant, cheerefull, discreete, and upright giving, and this is the duty commended, now followes the reward, *No want*, hee shall bee secured from necessity and penury. God will take order that those men shall not be brought

to

to penury themſelves, which are ſo charitable and liberall, that they bee ready to ſupply the wants of others. This duty ſhall be rewarded with freedome from want, but you muſt conſider that the Holy Ghoſt uſeth a figure here, where leſſe is ſpoken and more is underſtood, for he meaneth he ſhall have abundance, God will increaſe his ſtore, as it is ſaid elſewhere, *Hee that watereth ſhall bee watered alſo himſelfe.* You ſee firſt the promiſe, next the threat, in which

Pro. 11. 25.

note alſo the fault and the puniſhment.

The fault is, *hiding the eyes*, which intimateth a not giving, by the cauſe of it, not caring to take notice of the poore mans want and of ones duty to ſupply the ſame, but uſing fond ſhifts and excuſes to withhold a mans ſelfe from the duty. He hides his eyes from doing a good worke that refuſeth to know the neceſſity of it, and to take notice of the fit occaſions to doe it, either not confeſſing that the thing generally conſidered

ſidered is needfull, or when particular opportunities of doing it ſhall offer themſelves, findeth out ſome ſhift or other to cauſe himſelfe to beleeve, that then he need not doe it. This is the fault, omitting acts of mercifull bounty out of careleſneſſe to know or acknowledge the occaſion, yea wilfull ignorance and denying the ſame: What is the puniſhment of it: *much of curſes*, as it is word for word, one that ſhall be plentifull in curſes. A curſe is a ſpeech tending

to pronounce or wiſh not any ſmall but ſome great evill or miſchiefe upon man, that is mans curſe. But Gods curſe is both a pronouncing of evill and that in wrath and indignation, to ſhew his deteſtation of the perſon, and alſo an executing of the evill pronounced upon the offender to his ruine and deſtruction. A curſe noteth the denouncing & bringing upon a man ſome great evill as a forerunner of eternall deſtruction, and ſuch as ſhall certainely bring that after it. So you have

have the meaning of the words.

Here are foure ſeverall points which for brevity ſake I will confirme and prove ſeverally, and apply joyntly and all at once. The firſt point is,

Giving to the poore is a neceſſary duty, I draw this point out of the Text in this manner, what is commended to men with a gracious promiſe, and whoſe contrary is threatned with a curſe, muſt bee a duty ſure as all will yeeld; now ſo is this *Doct.* 1.

worke of giving to the poore as you ſee with your eyes, wherefore it muſt be undeniably concluded a duty, that is, a thing not which we may doe if we will, and if wee will not wee may chooſe, but whereto our conſciences are tied by the authority of God the ſole Commander of the conſcience, and which if wee omit, it ſhall be reputed a tranſgreſſion. Now that it is a duty, you ſhall perceive by the many Texts of Scripture which doe moſt expreſſely

preſſely require it. *Deut.* 15.9. *If thine eye bee evill againſt thy poore brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and it be ſinne unto thee,* and verſe the 10. *Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and thine heart ſhall not be grieved, when thou giveſt unto him,* and verſe the 11. *Thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poore, and to thy needy in the land.* Not giving is intitled a ſinne, giving, and that without griefe, and that with a wide hand is injoyned, *Eccleſ.* 11. 1,2. *Caſt thy bread upon the waters.*

waters. Give a portion to ſeven and to eight, that is, to many ſtill and ſtill. Loe giving, and a conſtant giving to many is required. *Luke* 11. 41. our Saviour ſaith, *Give almes of the things you have, and behold all things are cleane unto you*, It is a duty that gives unto our ſelves the lawfull uſe of all Gods creatures if we impart them to the poore, for almes is a gift beſtowed on a needy perſon, and 12.33. *Sell all that you have and give almes*: if a man want money, yet if hee have

have money worth that hee may ſpare, he muſt ſell and give, you ſee, and in ſome caſes muſt ſell much to beſtow in almes, yea and in ſome caſes all, as they did in the beginning of the Goſpell. And *Luke* 3. 11. when the people (meaning the common people) came about *Iohn* Baptiſt, asking him what they ſhould doe, you know what his anſwer was, *Let him that hath two coates give to him that hath none, and hee that hath meate doe likewiſe*, whereby you may conceive

Act. 4 34 35.

ceive that this giving is not a duty confined unto men of wealth that have great abundance and a large overplus of things, but it lies on the consciences of those that bee themselves but meane, if they meete with those that are meaner then themselves, in case they have any thing to spare, and another bee utterly destitute. And you know well what Saint *Paul* saith, *See that you abound in this grace also.* 2 Cor. 8. 7

I have alledged store enough of proofes, you shall heare reason also.

This

Reaſ. 1.

This is ſuch a duty as every man that is poore doth deſire and crave of another, and hopeth and wiſheth another ſhould performe to him, and cannot but blame him as hard-hearted and unmercifull, that refuſeth to performe it, as all that are poore and neceſſitous will readily affirme, and thoſe that are in wealth cannot but acknowledge if they will conſult with their owne hearts, for aske thy ſelfe if God ſhould take away thy goods before night and leave thee nothing

nothing at all, or very little, wouldeſt thou not thinke it a duty of ſome good perſon or other to furniſh thee with things needfull; He muſt tell a ranke manifeſt lie to his owne heart that will returne any other then an affirmative anſwer to this queſtion. Therefore it is a manifeſt duty neceſſarily ariſing from that great & plaine maxime. *Doe as you would be done to.*

Reaſ. 2. It is a duty becauſe it tends to the refreſhing of our Brethrens bowels

els, and ſupplying their wants, and keeping them from undergoing much hardneſſe, yea and from periſhing, and ſo deſerveth to be called a good deed, a good worke, as being truly beneficiall and comfortable to them to whom we ought to wiſh and doe well. For it pleaſeth God to provide ſo in ordering the world, that ſome ſhall have need and others ſhall have abundance, that He may try the diſpoſitions of the latter by the former. *The poore yee ſhall have alwaies with you,* [oh. 12. 8.

you, and seeing the poore cannot be succoured but by giving to them, and that succoured they must bee, seeing God doth owne them for his children and servants as well as the rich, therefore it must be a duty to give unto them.

Reas. 3. Thirdly, this opening hearts and hands to the needy doth abound, saith Saint *Paul*, by *many thankesgivings unto God, whilest by the experience of this ministration they praise God for your professed subjection to the*

2 Cor. 9. 12, 13.

Gospell

Goſpell of Chriſt, and your liberall contribution towards them; this good worke is ſuch as maketh heaven reſound with thankes and praiſes. If the tongues of any Receivers be ſilent through unthankfullneſſe, yet their very loynes doe bleſſe God in their kind, but thoſe that are not quite deſtitute of grace will open their mouthes to bleſſe God the giver of all, when they finde others to open their hands and give them that which helpeth to comfort and cheere

cheere them. How can we be ſo careleſſe of Gods honour, as not to know our ſelves bound to do that, that maketh for his honour ſo much as this good worke doth, that is ſo fruitfull of thankes unto him.

Reaſ. 4. The fourth reaſon (which I ſhall preſſe moſt upon you) is this. That is undoubtedly a duty which muſt juſtifie the truth of our Religion, or elſe condemne us as hollow-hearted and guilefull and ſwayed by hypocriſie, for it be-

behoveth every man to have firme and evident proofes of his being a true and not a falſe Chriſtian, ſeeing upon that point, doth all his comfort in death and after death, and his hopes of remiſſion of ſinnes and eternall happineſſe depend; for not every one that appeareth to others and beleeves himſelfe to bee a true Chriſtian ſhall inherit eternall life, but hee that is ſo indeed and truth. Now bounty to the poore is a reciprocall note of ſound-

neſſe

neſſe in Religion, and convertible, ſo that whoſoever profeſſeth Religion and is mercifull to the poore, He is ſuch an one indeed as in appearance hee ſeemeth, but contrarily, whoſoever profeſſeth Religion and is hard, miſerable, niggardly, and cannot finde in his heart to give to the poore according to his meanes, that man looke he never ſo faire to the worlds eye and to his owne, pray he never ſo often, heare he never ſo many Sermons, faſt he never ſo frequently, fre-

frequent he the Sacrament never ſo conſtantly, reade he the Scriptures never ſo daily, be he never ſo earneſt a condemner of other mens faults, and publike abuſes and diſorders, and let him in all other things that make the greateſt ſhew of Religion be never ſo abundant, I ſay the man that giveth not to the poore, (all theſe things notwithſtanding) is but an hypocrite, a diſſembler, a falſe hearted man, one in whoſe ſervices the Lord taketh no delight, and

and whose devotions he will not regard: which I shall prove to you by cleare and manifest Texts of Scripture, and effectuall reasons taken out of the Scripture and grounded on it. Looke in *Isay* 58.7. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen to deale thy bread to the hungry, to bring the poore that are cast out to thy house, and when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy selfe from thine owne flesh.* The Lords intention is not to confound the duties

ties of the two tables, but this hee meaneth, that that is true fasting which makes a man truly mercifull and bountifull to his afflicted brethren. You loose your labour in fasting if by your fasting you bee not enabled to bountifullnesse towards the poore. So Saint *Iames* saith, 1. last. *True Religion and undefiled before God the Father, is this, to visit the fatherlesse and widdow in their distresse, and to keepe ones selfe,*&c. Here also the Holy Ghost meaneth that that habit

or vertue of Religion or worſhipping God is in it ſelfe ſincere and upright, and to God acceptable, and in his eſteeme ſpotleſſe and without blemiſh which produceth ſuch mercifullneſſe in the performer, that it makes him voluntarily and of his owne accord helpfull to the diſtreſſed Saints. Looke into the ſtory of the rich man, *Luke* 18. 18. & 24. He was deſirous to inherit eternall life, He came to Chriſt to learne the way to life, he knew the commande-

mandements. He had diligently kept them in reſpect of outward carriage even from his youth, being ſuch a one as *Paul* in his Phariſaiſme, in reſpect of the Law unrebukeable, yet lacked hee one thing, as our Saviour tels him, that is, *to ſell all and give to the poore and follow Chriſt*, and becauſe hee went away ſorrowfull and would not buy heaven at that rate, our Saviour ſaith, *it is as poſſible for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle as for a rich man* (He

muſt needs meane ſuch a rich man as this was that would not ſell all and give to the poore at Chriſts ſpeciall command) *to enter into Heaven.* Now Brethren he that will not at Chriſts ordinary commandement give away a little, would not at his ſpeciall commandement ſell all and give it away, therefore he cannot get into heaven, and therefore if he profeſſe Religion he doth but dally with it and play the hypocrite too in profeſſing it. Yet another proofe, *Mat.* 25.

41.

41. to the end. Thoſe that called Chriſt Lord and ſo made a ſhew of Chriſtian Religion are in this name bidden to take their portion with the divell and his angels in thoſe eternall prepared flames, for that they had not miniſtred to Chriſt in his neceſſities, not meaning it of his perſonall neceſſities which they never lived to ſee, but of his neceſſities in his members, and thoſe whom hee will caſt from him at the laſt day were undoubtedly

but hypocrites if they profeſſed Religion, and ſo ſhall they bee then intertained that are not liberall to the poore, wherefore they be but diſſemblers how godly ſoever they ſeeme.

Jam. 2. 13. *Iudgement without mercy ſhall bee to the mercileſſe*, and hee to whom unmercifull judgement belongeth, is but an hypocrite.

Pro. 21. 13 *He that turneth away his eare from the cry of the poore hee ſhall cry and not be heard*; and hee that ſhall not have his cry heard, is but an hypocrite, and Saint

Iohn

Iohn ſaith, *let us love in deed and truth*, ſhewing it by not *ſhutting our bowels of compaſſion* againſt our needy brethren *when we have this worlds goods*, and then ſaith, *hereby know wee that we are of the truth and ſhall aſſure our hearts before him*, 1 *Iohn* 3. 17, 18, 19. Whoſoever profeſſeth to beleeve in Chriſt and hath an open heart and hand to his penurious Brother, and ſhewes himſelfe to love by his deeds of mercy, may by this know that *hee is of the truth*, that is, a

true beleever. He that hath no true charity, no true faith, no true obedience, no true wisedome, seeme hee never so religious is yet destitute of the power of Religion, because these graces cannot be separated from true devotion to God, and the right worshipping of Him, must needs beget and increase the same; Now there is no faith without workes of mercy, *For what will it availe to say I have faith and have no workes* (hee meaneth specially of these workes

Iam.2.14

of

of mercy though not onely) *will that faith ſave.* There is no love without workes of mercy and bounty to the poore, *For hee that hath this worlds goods and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhuts up his bowels of compaſſion againſt him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* There is no true obedience without works of mercy, for obedience is a walking in all the waies of God and doing all that he requireth, of which this giving to the poore is one as plainely required

1 Ioh. 3. 17.

as any other, and more often then very many other. There is no true wiſdome without theſe workes of mercy, for the wiſedome that comes from above is pure, and full of mercy and of good fruits. So now it is more then undeniable, that all ſhewes of piety are counterfeit where giving to the poore is wanting as a companion of them. And yet one more reaſon ſhall confirme it and I have done with this point.

Reaſ. 5. Whoſoever ſeemeth re-

religious and is under the power of covetouſneſſe is ſurely but a diſſembler, for it is a thorny ground that is choked with the deceitfullneſſe of the riches of this world. Now hee that giveth not to the poore is poſſeſſed and overcome of covetouſneſſe, becauſe the love of money keeps him from following the directions of Gods word in the uſing of it, and ſo he loveth money more then God, more then his poore brother, more then the rewards of God, and more

more then heaven it felfe, and therefore hee is but thorny ground, an arrant hypocrite, and ſo will Chriſt account him and cenſure him at laſt. Wherefore my Brethren, you cannot but acknowledge the neceſſity of this good work, without it all your religion is in vaine, as you have heard it proved undeniably. So have I done with the firſt point, the next is,

Doct.2. *Bounty is the beſt meanes of preventing povertie*, I ſay to the poore,

poore, this particular kinde of bounty is the certaineſt way to eſcape penurie, nothing can more effectually deliver a man from need then to be liberall to them that are in need. In due order and manner I ſhall ſtrive to make this Paradoxe good, for nothing ſeemes to the miſer more abſurd then this, that his giving away his goods will cauſe him to lacke nothing. But looke what our Saviour ſaith, *Luke* 12.33. where commanding to ſell and give almes,

almes, hee bids *make bagges that waxe not old*, If any thing will ſecure from need it is to have full bagges ſafely laid up, and you ſee that this almes-giving is providing a man full bags, for it were in vaine to bid make bags, if his meaning were not that they ſhal be filled, *He that ſoweth liberally ſhall reape liberally*. Doe you not ſee that giving is nothing elſe but ſowing! and there is never an husbandman amongſt you but knowes that ſowing is the way to be rich, and

1 Cor. 9.6

and to keepe away neceſſity. He that hath much and good land to ſow, and ſeed to ſow it, and doth ſow it, he, if any man, hopeth to eſcape wants; if therefore Saint *Paul* may be beleeved, giving liberally will make a man rich, therefore *Salomon* having bidden *give to ſeven and to eight*, adds the reaſon, *for thou knoweſt not what evill ſhall bee on the earth*, as if he had ſaid, that this is the beſt way to be ſecured againſt all hard chances that may befall,

Eccleſ. 11. 2.

There

Prov. 11. 24, 25.

There is that ſcattereth and yet increaſeth. Loe this ſcattering brings no loſſe but gaine, to the ſcatterer, *the liberall ſoule ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth ſhall be watered againe.* By being watered and made fat, is meant being ſtored with good things, and to have ſtore, is the beſt prevention of want. Let us ſhew you reaſons too, why this muſt needs be ſo.

Reaſ. 1. This is to bee a good Steward.

Firſt, we all confeſſe that God is the Great Lord and Maſter of this Family

Family of Heaven and Earth, and that riches do not come to men either by fortune or chance, or by their owne induſtry, or the love of their friends, or any like ſecondary meanes as the higheſt cauſe, but all is from the diſpenſation and appointment of God, who is the Ruler of all things, making rich and making poore, and ſetting up one and pulling downe another. Wherefore all men bee but his ſervants and ſtewards to whom hee pleaſeth to commit more

or

or leſſe as himſelfe ſees fit; and hence it followes, that it muſt needs availe much to the continuation and increaſe of any mans wealth, that he be found a good Steward of the things committed to him by his Maſter, for whom will a man rather intruſt with his eſtate, then thoſe whom long experience hath approved to bee faithfull. Now to communicate our ſubſtance to the poore with a large and inlarged heart and hand, this is to doe the office of

of a good and faithfull Steward, as Saint *Peter* teacheth in ſo many words, 1 *Pet.*4.9,10. *Vſe Hoſpitality one to another*, that is one act of bounty to be practiſed, ſpecially towards the poore, and then hee adds this reaſon, *as every man hath received the gift, ſo miniſter the ſame one unto another as good Stewards of the manifold graces of God.* Doe you not perceive that the due diſcharge of our Stewardſhip ſtands in miniſtring unto another the gifts that God hath given

ven us, wherefore he in whom the Lord doth find this fidelity ſhal never be put out of his office, but rather the Lord wil deale with him as in the Parable, the King did with his good & faithfull ſervant, to whom hee gave this praiſe ſaying, *Well done*, & added this reward, *thou haſt been faithfull in little, be ruler over much.* Faithfullnes in uſing what we have, you ſee to be the beſt meanes of being intruſted with more, & conſequently of being freed from wants. Now liberall diſtribution to the poore

is

is a being faithfull in what we have, this therfore if any thing will cauſe the Lord to give us more and more, and never to waxe weary of giving to us, if we will give unto others for his ſake and according to his commandement.

Pro. 10. 22.

Secondly, *Salomon* hath told us, that *the bleſſing of God maketh rich and addeth no ſorrow therewith*, that is, gives a comfortable and delightfull increaſe of our eſtate even ſuch as is worth having and is truly beneficiall, for to have

Reaſ. 2. It procures Gods bleſſing which makes rich

have a great eſtate as a great burden upon our ſhoulders, and to bee but a horſe to carrie a great loade of gold and ſilver through the world, this is not to be a maſter but a ſlave of riches, now ſuch comfortable wealth doth not ſpring from mans wit or paines, but from the bleſſing of God, if you give credit to *Salomon*, for if he vouchſafe not his bleſſing, as the *Watchman watcheth* and *the builder buildeth in vaine*, ſo *doth the Husbandman plow* and *the*

mer-

merchant traffique and *the labourer labour in vaine*, either no increaſe will come or none but a vexing and cumberſome increaſe, now the Lord hath expreſſely promiſed his bleſſing unto thoſe that will open their hands to their poore brethren, ſaying in the fore-alledged place of *Deut.* 15.10. *Becauſe that for this thing the Lord will bleſſe thee in all thy workes and in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto.* Doe you not all ſeeme covetous of Gods bleſſing, doe you

you not beg it for your ſelves and for your children and friends, hereby making a ſhew as if you counted it the moſt deſirable of all things, the moſt aſſured cauſe of all proſperity, if you be any other then hypocrites in begging Gods bleſſing, you muſt doe that for which hee ſaith hee will bleſſe you, and in what, in all your works and affaires, yea and all you put your hands unto. Certainely God will never bee found a promiſe-breaker, *what hee ſaith with his*

his hand, as Salomon profeſſeth in his prayer, that his own experience had taught him. So we conclude our reaſon evidently and ungainesayably, unleſſe a man will deny Gods power and truth, the efficacy of his bleſſing, what will ſurely procure Gods bleſſing upon a mans affaires and eſtate, that will ſave him from wants, ſo will giving to the poore doe, ſeeing hee hath bound it by promiſe to the liberall giver to the needy, therefore this is the beſt way to be freed from wants.

Reaſ. 3. It is a lending to God. Pro. 19. 17

A third reaſon I will add, to lend unto Almighty God will ſurely procure abundance, for hee will never prove bankerupt, he will never borrow without a purpoſe and reſolution to repay, and without actuall repayment, and that in the fitteſt time and manner. The neceſſity of many great perſonages cauſeth that they are driven to borrow and cannot make ſatisfaction back againe in due time. The covetouſneſſe of others cauſeth that though

though they have much lying by them, yet they cannot bring their hearts to part with any portion to pay their debts, as we ſee in experience, ſo that the ſummes that are owing from ſuch will never ſecure a man from want, but muſt be reckoned amongſt the number almoſt of deſperate debts. But I hope no heart amongſt you will intertaine ſo baſe and wretched a conceit of Almighty God, wherefore to have him in our debt is a ſure meanes of having enough to pre-

ſerve us from need. Now you know the place wellenough where he hath given his bill to you for the repayment of what you give to the poore, ſaying, *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that giveth to the poore lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given he will pay him againe.* Loe brethren, the bill of Gods hand as I may call it, in which he hath both acknowledged the debt and promiſed payment. Be it knowne unto all men by this preſent promiſe, that I the Lord God of Heaven and Earth,

Earth, doe owe and acknowledge my ſelfe to be indebted to every mercifull liberall man, all thoſe ſummes of money which he hath beſtowed, or ſhall beſtow in relieving the diſtreſſed, to bee payed backe unto him whenſoever he ſhall demand it; for a bond or bill that names no day, binds to payment at demand, and to this payment well and truly to be payed, I binde my ſelfe firmely by this preſent promiſe, ſent, ſealed, and delivered by *Salemon* my

knowne Secretary or Scribe. Brethren unleſſe you will proclaime the Lord an inſufficient or a diſhoneſt debter or paymaſter, you ſee that giving to the poore is the beſt way of ſaving your ſelves from wants, for loe the Lords bill for your ſecurity, you ſhall have it againe *every farthing token* as you uſe to ſpeake, and that *farre ſurer then checker*, which yet the proverbe hath chronicled for greateſt aſſurance.

Reaſ. 4. Let me add a fourth reaſon,

reaſon, that you may beleeve a point to naturall reaſon ſo unbeleeveable, what will cauſe many prayers and ſupplications to God for you, that muſt ſure cauſe Him to give you all good things in abundance, and ſo deliver you from penurie and neceſſity, you will yeeld this to be a truth, if you account prayers worth any thing, as Saint *Paul* certainely did, and for this cauſe ſo often required them, ſaying, *Brethren pray for us*, and againe, *I beſeech you in the name*

It will cauſe prayers, and God will heare crying againſt, therefore ſee Exod. 22.27.

of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and for the love of the Spirit, that you ſtrive in prayer to God for me. The prayers made to God by his ſervants upon due ground and warrant cannot bee in vaine, if God have not in vaine taken to himſelfe the name of a God that heareth prayers, now you know the poore will ſurely pay backe to you their prayers to God for you, 2 *Cor.*9. 14. or if any ſhould bee ſo unthankfull as not to doe it, yet the houſhold of God will, to whom you ought moſt

moſt to abound in bountie.

The Lord ſaith, that a poore man *wronged will cry and God will heare his cry for he is mercifull,* and will it not follow on the contrary, a poore man refreſhed will pray to God for you, and God will heare him, becauſe he is mercifull. If his mercy will moove him to puniſh the oppreſſor of the poore, the ſaid mercy muſt needs moove him to reward the ſuccourer. And if he be carnall that God will not heare his pray- Exod. 22. 23.

ers for himſelfe, yet his prayer for his benefactor he will heare, as well as his cryes againſt his wrong-doer. Wherefore this giving is an undoubted courſe to procure all abundance of all good things, and to chaſe away wants and neceſſity. I know not how a point ſhould bee accounted proved and confirmed, ſufficiently, if you will not count this point ſo, and beleeve it accordingly. I come to the third point, *Hiding ones eyes*, that is, hindering himſelfe

ſelfe from knowing or reſolving to doe this duty by putting any ſhifts and pretences before his mind, this is to hide the eyes. I conceive, and I think none of you will object againſt the ſo interpreting the phraſe. The point is

It is a ſinne to hinder ones ſelfe from knowing and reſolving to doe his duty with idle ſhifts and pretences, with excuſes and allegations of this or that. Doct. 3.

There is a double ignorance of a duty, one of a duty in generall conſidered

dered as a duty universally, as not to know it is a duty to pray, to releeve the poore, which is a kinde of denying the propoſition of a Syllogiſme, that the underſtanding muſt make. There is an ignorance of a duty in particular, to wit, that this worke now at this time, with theſe circumſtances, is a duty, and this is a denying of the aſſumption, and each of them will hinder the concluſion of the conſcience, therefore one muſt doe this. Now to make ones ſelfe ignorant

rant of a duty either of theſe waies by ſeeming reaſons and objections is a ſinne, and the not doing of a duty which wee have made our ſelves ſo ignorant of, will make us ſubject to curſes you ſee, as well as if a man plainely refuſe to doe it without any ſuch pretences, for *hee that hideth his eyes ſhall have ſtore of curſes.* This is that which the Scripture calleth *winking with ones eyes*, and detaining the *truth in unrighteouſneſſe.*

Mat. 13. 15.

Rom. 1. 18

This is that Saint *Peter*

2 Pet. 5. 3. ter calleth *a not knowing willingly*, as the men of the old world knew nothing of *Noahs* going into the Arke, which had beene taught to them fixscore yeares together, becauſe with carnall objections they had blinded themſelves. This is a kinde of refuſing to know judgement. That this is a great fault, I ſhall proove to you by two reaſons.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, it is a meere fruit of hypocriſie, that is, of that vice by which a man deſireth to ſeeme good

good and not to be ſo; for becauſe hee would not ſeeme to offend, hee invents devices and ſhifts: if the anſwer ſhould be downe-right, I know it is a duty, but I will not doe it, Such a flat oppoſition to conſcience will make a man to be *condemned of himſelfe*, but becauſe hee would maintaine in himſelfe an opinion of himſelfe that he is good, and yet is not willing to be good in truth (and ſhew it by doing the thing commanded, though his corruption ſtand never ſo

ſo averſe to it) therefore he ſeekes about for reaſons to hide his eyes, to make him believe it is no duty, that hee may at once both ſerve ſinne, and not be knowne to himſelfe to ſerve it. As did the proud men to whom God ſent *Ieremie* with a commandement that they ſhould not goe downe into Ægypt but tarry in the land, they would not ſeeme ſo rebellious as to ſay, though God bid us tarry here yet we will not, but they hid their eyes by making themſelves beleeve that

Jer. 43. 2, 3

Ieremy

Ieremy was inticed by *Baruch* to prophesie this against them, that hee might deliver them into the hands of the Babylonians.

Open rebellion saith, I will not doe it though it be a duty, hypocrisie will deale more finely, and say I would doe it if it were a duty, but it is not, though it have none but frivolous allegations to disprove it: hence commeth this hiding of the eyes, therefore it is a great offence.

This hiding of the *Reas.* 2.

eyes

eyes cauſeth the Lord at laſt to make men blinde, even to ſtrike them with a ſpirit of blindneſſe, that they ſhall bee ſo hood-winked & muffled as the lighteſt and brighteſt truth that is, ſhall never ſinke into their mindes, and ſo they will be hardned in ſinne againſt all reproofes and exhortations and admonitions, that nothing will worke them to amendment, and ſo by utter impenitencie and hardneſſe they tumble themſelves headlong to the pit of perdition, as you ſee in the

the Prophet *Isay*, God ſaith, *Make the eyes of this people blind and their heart fat*, that is, as much as if hee had ſaid, all thy labour with them ſhall profit nothing, they ſhall grow harder and harder, blinder and blinder, the more they be taught and inſtructed. Why? What is the reaſon that God will ſell them over to their owne hardneſſe and blindneſſe? That place alledged alſo, *Mat.* 13. 14,15. leads us to the reaſon, *Their eyes have they cloſed, leaſt at any time they ſhould ſee and con-*

convert and bee healed. A refuſing to know by cloſing ones eyes againſt light with fond excuſes, that is the true ſinne which God puniſheth even with giving them up to utter impenitencie and blindneſſe, ſo this that is a fruit of guile and procurer of utter hardneſſe is a fearefull ſinne. Now of the laſt point, *He ſhall have curſes enough.*

Doct. 4. *The omitting of good duties will bring many curſes,* ſinnes of omiſſion bring men under the curſe,

curſe, as Chriſt doth declare in bidding men depart from him curſed, becauſe they had not viſited him, and the Law that ſaith, *Curſed is he that doth not eſtabliſh the Law*, and the omitter of an injoyned duty doth not eſtabliſh the Law, therefore he is curſed.

Reaſ. 1. A wrong to God & man.

There is a double reaſon of the point according as there is a double curſe, They wrong God and man too, and therefore God and man both curſe him that is guilty: Hee that re-

refuſeth to doe that which God enjoyneth him to performe to any man for his benefit, is injurious to God that commands the doing of that good, and to man that ſhould enjoy the benefit of it. The Steward which is wiſhed by his Maſter to give ſo much to ſuch a Servant, and keepeth it himſelfe, is a theefe both to his Maſter, and alſo to the perſon whom he hath defrauded of his Maſters allowance; Hence it is, that men in anger many times will (though they

ſhould

ſhould not) wreake themſelves upon them with curſes and imprecations, and God alwaies will puniſh their unfaithfullneſſe to himward with execution of the curſes denounced againſt them. Thus have I made good theſe ſeverall points.

I will doe the beſt I am able to make them Uſefull to you, and that in way of reproofe, inſtruction, and comfort.

Uſes.

1 For Reproofe.

Firſt, for reproofe, I beſeech you brethren be willing to receive reproofe,

proofe, for the reproofes of wisdome are wholesome reproofes, and tend to life, & give me leave, yea give your own consciences leave, to reprehend and chide you throughly, for your great backwardnes & unwillingnes to this work, whereto the God of Heaven hath made so plaine and mercifull a promise, and for your frequent falling into that sinne, against which you reade and heare so fearefull and hideous, and grievous a threat of many curses. What a naugh-

naughtineſſe is it in a man! that hath the will of God evidently revealed unto him in the Scriptures, and that is not ignorant of thoſe Texts that command duty and forbid ſinne, yet to fall ſtill into the ſinne forbidden, and ſtill to be found careleſſe of the duties required, yea ſo to fall into the faults and fore-ſlacke the duties, that hee ſcarſe ever taketh notice of his offending either waies, to find fault with himſelfe for it, or to acknowledge his evill carriage therein.

Whence can this contrariety of our lives to the ſacred Scriptures ariſe, but from not beleeving the Scriptures, that is, our making God the author of them a Lier. Beloved in our Lord, come and lay your lives to this Text, here God you ſee hath undertaken to ſave from want all thoſe that by the exerciſe of bounty have beene carefull to ſupply the wants of the poore. Say then, how comes it to paſſe that you have beene ſo backward to thoſe coſts, ſo negligent of this ſervice,

ſo

ſo unwilling to lay out your money to this good worke. Whence is it I ſay that you ſtand ſo averſe to this ſervice? you may aſcribe it to other cauſes, if you luſt to deceive your ſelves with your vaine reaſonings, and be not willing to ſee your owne badneſſe, but the true cauſe and that that doth indeed render you ſo ſlacke to ſuch expences is nothing but that curſed bitter root of unbeleefe. You give no ſound credit to the promiſes of God in his Word made to the

bountifull, nor to the threats denounced against thoſe that hide their eyes; I ſay you doe not throughly and in your hearts aſſent to them. It is a moſt eaſie thing to brag of faith and to affirme with our mouthes, that wee beleeve the Scriptures, but to beleeve them indeed is not eaſie, and this is the cleereſt diſtinction betweene a ſound faith and a bare boaſting and bragging of faith, the one is effectuall and worketh by obedience, and the other is powerleſſe and

and cannot ſway the heart to obey. You are therefore now to take notice of your unbeleefe, to aſcribe your niggardlineſſe to that, and abhorre that evill roote that bringeth forth ſuch bad fruit that growes on that roote, and to abhorre your ſelves that you have not yet ſo farre prevailed with your own hearts as to make you beleeve the holy Scriptures ſeriouſly and throughly. For let us a little reaſon with you about this matter, doe you not find a great diffe-

rence betwixt your disposition to other costs and those of giving to the poore! you are ready to the other, to this marvellous backward; in the other you are free, in this sparing; in the other you are constant, in this seldome; the other you part with as if you saw some reason for them, these you part with as if there were no cause at all that you should part with them. This could not be if you did throughly beleeve this present Text of Scripture, other costs you

you extenuate both before and after the beſtowing, piſh, tis but a matter of ſix pence, let it go, theſe you aggravate and make ſgreat, why, I pay ſix pence by the weeke or a ſhilling, and for pounds, your bounty (of the moſt) is never wonted to ſuch high ſummes. To workes of kindneſſe ſome are pretty forward, to ſuperfluous expences about their bodies, houſes, and children, to trimme and ſet them forth, very forward: to workes of riot and luxurie many be over

forward, but to workes of pittie and to beſtowing on the poore, oh how quite contrarily affected. I pray where hath God promiſed to preſerve you from need if you lay out your money in rich and faire clothes, in plenteous banquets, in viſitings, in feaſting, in curteſies or the like, no where that I can remember. But if you lay out for mercy to the needie, loe here and in many places beſides, you have a promiſe that you ſhall not want, did you beleeve this and thoſe promiſes,

by

by how much ſuch giving is more acceptable to God, and ſhould bee more profitable to your ſelves, by ſo much you would be more forward and plentifull therein; oh therefore ſee, confeſſe, bewaile this niggardly diſpoſition with the very fountaine of it, infidelity, not beleeving that the Scriptures be from God and ſo moſt undoubtedly true, and ſhall moſt certainely bee fullfilled in every promiſe and every threat.

Furthermore conſider, how glad you are to fight

againſt wants by ſuch meanes as naturall reaſon doth preſcribe, and what paines you take to keepe out penurie. The worldly waies of not being pinched with penurie are carefully followed. What makes the ventrous Merchant to live within a few inches of death upon the floating waves, and to commit himſelfe to the danger of Pyrates, ſhipwracke, diſeaſes, and to undergoe the trouble of being impriſoned in his ſhip for many moneths together, and the labour of a tedi-

ous

ous journey! why, this is the meanes to ſave him from want and to make his ſtate plentifull. Why doth the Tradeſman lay out his ſtocke, frequent markets and faires, toile and take paines in getting together commodities and ſelling them againe? why, elſe he could not maintaine his charge, nor hold up his credit, nor eſcape want. What makes every man ſo thriftie, ſo painefull, ſo carefull of his eſtate, he might ſure ſpend all elſe and come to want. Loe when reaſon preſcribes to prevent

wants,

wants, you doe not ſtand on points of hazard, labour, or any thing. Surely if you gave credit to Gods promiſe as well as to the counſell of naturall reaſon, you would try his way as well as the waies of the world. It is undeniable, every man would ſave himſelfe and his from need, and if you were perſwaded, that giving to the poore would doe it, you would as certainely, willingly, and abundantly give, as you are carefull to ſave and get, and uſe all good husbandry in al other things.

And

And a little more to aggravate this great fault of niggardlineſſe in giving to the poore; Let us ſuppoſe that ſome mighty and rich Monarch ſhould ſend his Sonne or Servant unto you, requiring you to furniſh him with things neceſſary for ſuch an occaſion, and withall promiſe of his honour, that you ſhould never want any thing, if hee found you for his ſake liberall to ſuch perſons, would not you bee at much coſt for them, would you not even ſtraine your ſelves to the utmoſt

utmoſt for them. Loe now beloved, a King might winne you to lay out halfe your eſtate, yea all and more then all, even ſo as to run farre in debt, if he would ſay to you, thou ſhalt never lack if thou wilt do this kindneſſe for me. But the promiſe that God hath here made, workes upon you no more then if you had never heard a word of it, and yet it is one of the ſentences that is to bee read, and I thinke is read often in your eares. Surely I conclude againſt you, whatſoever your tongues

tongues ſay, yet your hearts doe not verily beleeve the Scriptures, and therefore the Word you heare profits not, becauſe it is not mixed with faith in you that heare it. Will you not finde out your infidelity to condemne it in your ſelves by improoving your unwillingneſſe to give to the poore as a juſt proofe of it! if you doe not obſerve the roote upon which ſinnes doe grow, you ſhall never mend them becauſe you ſhall never ſee their hatefullneſſe and dangerouſnes, but

but if you informe your ſelves aright of the cloſe and ſecret vices which produce neglects of good duties in you, thoſe omiſſions would ſo much humble you as to procure a reformation.

Uſe 2. Of Exhortation.

I have reproved you enough, I proceed to exhort and provoke you to this duty and to deterre you from this ſin. Here is a duty *giving to the poore*, here is a ſinne *hiding the eyes*, what ſay you? will you performe this duty hereafter? will you take heede of this ſinne?

ſinne? It is certaine, that hearing without reſolution to obey is meere hypocriſie, and a loathſome abuſe of Gods ordinance; you ſtand all here before the Lord as if you were his people and would obey him. Now ſhew your ſelves to bee either true or falſe, true by conſenting to the Word and ſetling your hearts in a purpoſe of obeying, or falſe by the contrary. Make this concluſion with your ſelves, hath the living God my Maſter not alone enjoyned me to give

give unto the poore, but alſo undertaken to provide for me and mine, that no want ſhall befall us, if for his ſake we will put upon us a liberall reſolution, and hath hee made me know that ſtore of curſes ſhall purſue me if I fore-ſlacke this duty upon any pretexts or excuſes; well then, I doe even covenant with my ſelfe through his helpe to be more abundant in this duty, then ever I have beene. Lord thy commandement ſhould binde me though no promiſe were annexed, out

of

of a mind willing to ſubject it ſelfe to thee, I ſhould performe that which thou requireſt though thou didſt not threaten. A good ſervant will addreſſe himſelfe to his maſters work upon a bare bidding, though his maſter threaten him not for negligence, but if his maſter be ſo urgent as to quicken him by promiſes and threats, becauſe it is a proofe that his maſter is earneſtly deſirous to, have that worke well looked unto, he will bee ſo much more carefull and

and diligent. Therefore now, I will no longer hide mine eyes, I will no more ſend my wits about to find out ſhifts & evaſions, whereby I may winde my ſelfe out of the hands of mine owne conſcience, but I will through Gods helpe, I will give liberally to the poore, and if I finde my heart backward, and my hand bound up with the cords of niggardlineſſe, if I find a kinde of riſing and grumbling againſt the duty, I will breake through that backwardneſſe either by faire meanes

meanes or by foule, I will helpe my ſelfe by the remembrance and conſideration of this promiſe, or threat, or both. I will demand of my ſelfe, and ſay what meaneſt thou to bee averſe from a duty that ſhall be ſo profitable unto thy ſelfe, by giving to this man, thou ſhalt not advantage him ſo much as thy ſelfe, thou ſhalt a little ſupply his need for the preſent, but thou ſhalt ſave thy ſelfe from need for ever; I, I my ſelfe ſhall be the gainer, I ſhall intereſt my ſelfe into

into that expreſſe and evident promiſe of God, which I heare, *Hee that giveth ſhall not want.* I ſhall aſſure my ſelfe upon the truth of the moſt faithfull God, not to be delivered over unto penurie. But contrarily, If I yeeld to mine own pinching humour, and ſtop mine eyes, and hold my hand, and doe not give when God calls for it in the neceſſities of his people, I ſhall hinder my ſelfe, endammage my eſtate more then tenne times ſo much money can hinder, for the loſſe of

of halfe or of all mine eſtate, were not ſo great a miſery, as to lie open to curſes, yea to many curſes. O I will never ſave a few pence, ſhillings, or pounds, ſo fooliſhly I ſet by them to make my ſelf obnoxious to a multitude of curſes. Brethren I pray you ſtirre up your reſolutions to this duty by the conſideration of this threat and promiſe, if when you be in hearing, you would cauſe your ſelves to be perſwaded, and ſet downe this concluſion. I ſee this is a duty, I ſee God hath promiſed

miſed abundant reward, I ſee he hath threatned heavie puniſhment, therefore J will reſolve to obey, ſo obedient hearing would bring forth fruit, thoſe reſolutions would at length take place in your lives. Gods Spirit would incline you to obey if you would thus ſtrive to incline your ſelves to obey. But when you heare with an evill and ſtiffe heart, and will not ſo much as labour to worke your wills to a firme purpoſe of practiſing, it cannot poſſibly fall out, that you ſhould

ſhould put a duty in practiſe after hearing, upon which you did not ſetledly reſolve in hearing.

But that I may not exhort in vaine, I will ſpeake in order of foure things. Firſt, I will ſhew you Rules for the due performance of this worke. Secondly, I will preſcribe you meanes that will inable you to it. Thirdly, I will take away ſuch excuſes as may elſe keepe you from it. Laſtly, I will ſubjoyne motives that will induce you to it.

1 Rules for right giving.

First, then you must have direction for the due and orderly performance of this work. Our bounty to the poore must be regular and orderly, for not all giving but a due and prudent giving pleaseth God, and procures this blessing, & not all refusing to give, but hiding the eyes, that is, refusing to give when one should give, doth procure this curse, therefore in the 112. Psalme where hee commends this duty very largely, he saith, *A good man is mercifull and lendeth and ordereth*

reth his waies by Iudge-ment, that is, with pru-dence and diſcretion, now theſe directions about giving ſhew

1. Who muſt give.

2. To whom it muſt be given.

3. The gift to be gi-ven.

4. The manner of gi-ving, which being decla-red, the duty of giving is plainely ſet out to us.

1. Who muſt give, To this I anſwer, all muſt give if occaſion ſerve, but chiefly the wealthy. Not onely thoſe that have abundance, but thoſe alſo

that have a ſmall portion and are themſelves none of the richeſt, muſt give to the poore, even to ſuch as are poorer then themſelves, and preſſed with greater need, you ſhall ſee this anſwer confirmed in both parts. When the common people came to *Iohn* Baptiſt demanding what they ſhould doe, his anſwer is recorded, *Luke* 3.11. *Hee that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meate let him doe likewiſe*, you perceive, that God doth not binde onely men that have

have great ſtore of goods to communicate, but thoſe alſo that themſelves are but ſlenderly provided for, yet having ſomething to ſpare are to impart that they can ſpare, unto ſuch as are in greater need then themſelves: he doth not ſay that he which hath but one coate, muſt leave himſelfe naked and give it to him that had none before, but he that hath two, not alone he that hath 5. or 6. or halfe a ſcore, but he that hath one more then his owne need requireth. I pray

you that are men of meaner ranke, not to poſt of this worke from your ſelves to your more able neighbours, if you will beleeve *Iohn* Baptiſt, hee that hath a little muſt impart of that little to him that hath leſſe, doth not the Apoſtle *Paul* give us a moſt worthy example in the *Theſſalonians*, of whom he witneſſeth, 2 Cor. 8. 2 that *their deepe bounty abounded to the riches of their liberality*, though they were a very poore people, (partly becauſe they had ſuffered great perſecutions for the Goſpell,

Goſpell, as Saint *Paul* witneſſeth in his Epiſtle to them) yet they made a ſhift to gather a great ſumme of money, to ſend unto the brethren at *Iudea*, which it may ſeeme did then ſuffer greater hardneſſe then themſelves by famine, here is a true praiſe to have a heart richer then a purſe, and a farre larger quantity of mercy then money, ſo now lower perſons muſt not exempt themſelves, or ſuppoſe that God diſpenceth with them from giving to the poore. But this

worke especially belon-
geth to the wealthier
sort, who being as it
were a full Cisterne, may
best let goe the cocke of
bounty to the releeving
of the thirsty, therefore
it is charged upon them
in speciall, saying to the
rich, *Give in charge tha*
1 Tim. 6. 17. *they be rich in good works*
ready to distribute, apt to
communicate. As seeing is
the worke of the eye as
an eye, going the work of
the foot as a foot, so is gi-
ving even a plentifull
and constant giving, the
worke of a rich man as a
rich man, and as a candle
is

is of no worth if it give no light, nor ſalt if it have no ſavour, ſo neither a rich man farther then he hath bounty, it is the ſpeciall ſervice of his ſpeciall place, ſo all muſt be givers, the rich moſt of all; but now the ſecond queſtion muſt bee anſwered.

2. To whom muſt we give?

The Text anſwers the queſtion, *to the poore*. A poore man, is he that either wanteth neceſſities altogether, or hath them in ſcant meaſure, theſe be the principall objects of

bounty. It is not unlawfull to give to a wealthy man, but mercifull giving, for which God will account himſelfe as it were beholding, muſt ſeeke for its object a needy perſon, one that wants the neceſſaries which ſhould make his life comfortable in a fit meaſure, *I was hungry and you fed me*, and *Iob* cauſed the loynes of the poore to bleſſe him, but you muſt be informed, that there are two ſorts of poore men, ſome upon whom idleneſſe and ſlothfullneſſe & a reſolution

tion not to work and take paines, doth bring poverty, according to that of *Salomon, The idle perſon ſhall be clothed with ragges*, and the ſluggards *poverty commeth as an armed man*, now of theſe that is true which Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Hee that walketh inordinately and will not worke, let him not eate. The ſluggard that will not labour in ſummer, Salomon* ſaith, *ſhall beg in winter and have nothing*, you ſee that theſe men that be able to worke, and out of ſluggiſhneſſe will not, are exempted from the number

number of thoſe to whom the Lord would have our hands open to give. To feed them is to fat vermine, as it were, to feed mice, rats, and polecats, yea it is to feed vice it ſelfe to whom they make themſelves ſervants, this is a very ill imployment of mercy, indeed if ſickneſſe lie upon them or the like miſery, that they cannot worke for the preſent, they muſt not be ſuffered to periſh for want of helpe, but elſe they muſt be compelled to caſt off idleneſſe by being put to it,

it, either to ſtarve or to earne ſomething for their owne bellies, and therefore moſt wiſely and equally do our lawes puniſh with a mulct thoſe that doe releeve ſuch vagrants, but ſome poore there be through Gods hand croſſing them: weakeneſſe, ſickeneſſe, blindneſſe, lameneſſe, and a great charge, want of worke, or the like things (which no labour of theirs could prevent) have made penurious and filled them with neceſſity, as it were with emptineſſe, theſe be the proper

per objects of mercy and bounty, the fitteſt perſons in the world to whom a gift may be given, as it is expreſſed in the Law, *Deut.*15.7. *If there be among you a poore man within any of thy gates in thy land, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart, nor ſhut thine hand from thy poore brother, but ſhalt open thine hand wide unto him,* ſo *Levit.* 25. 35. *If thy brother be waxen poore, and fallen into decay with thee, thou ſhalt releeve him,* but of poore men ſome bee ſuch as ſhew forth holineſſe, theſe chiefely muſt be

be releeved, for Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Diſtributing to the neceſſities of the Saints*, and Chriſt ſaith, *In that you have done it to any one of theſe, you have done it to me*, yet ſo that wee muſt remember the commandement of Saint *Paul*, that wiſheth to doe good to all, and he treateth particularly of doing this kinde of good. All whom God, not their idleneſſe makes poore, muſt be releeved, but chiefely the godly poore, ſo you have two rules.

Rom. 12. 13.

Mat. 25, 40.

3. A third concernes the

the gift it ſelfe, in reſpect of the quantity and quality of it. Firſt, for the quality of it, it muſt bee our owne, every man muſt ſit under his owne vine and fig-tree, and therfore muſt give away no figs nor grapes but his owne, Iuſtice muſt be joyned with bounty, Iuſtice muſt gather together, and mercy muſt ſpread abroad, the Prophet bids, *doe juſtice and love mercy*, but to give away another mans goods is to commit theft, which no beſtowing of the thing ſtollen can

can possibly excuse, he that hopeth to make amends for his wrongfull getting by bestowing, suppose it were the whole (much lesse some part of the whole) is abhominable to God, for he goes about (as I may say) to bribe God, and to make him a partner in the spoyle, therefore Saint *Paul* wisheth a man *not to steale but to worke with ones hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth*, we must resolve to be rightly interessed into that which we com-

communicate to others you ſee, for giving is transferring the givers right to the receiver of free will, now how is it poſſible that he ſhould paſſe any right from himſelfe to another which never had it in himſelfe! wherefore an unjuſt man makes himſelfe utterly uncapable of giving almes, till hee have purged his goods, and ſeparated that which was his owne from that that is not his own, by a due & juſt practiſe of the work of reſtitution. Now for quantity, Saint *Paul* de-

determines it, saying that *the same may be as a matter of bounty*, and in the same Chapter, but this know, that *hee that soweth liberally shall reape liberally*, and that it may be liberall it must be fitted to two things; first, the necessity of the receiver, secondly, the ability of the giver, so the Lord commandeth in the law, as before, *Thou shalt give him sufficient for his need in that he wanteth*, and S. *Paul* saith, *That your abundance may be a supply for their want, and their abundance for your want, that there*

2 Cor. 9. 5

Ver. 6.

there may be an equality, and after, *the miniſtration of this ſervice ſupplieth the neceſſity of the Saints*, this is one thing that muſt limit the gift, the other is the ability of the giver, as Saint *Peter* ſaith, *Let him that miniſtreth doe it as of the ability which God hath given*, and the Diſciples purpoſed as they were able to ſend reliefe to the brethren in *Iudea*, onely we muſt take heed that we do not ſtreighten our ſelves in our owne conceits, and make our ſelves beleeve our ability is leſſe then it is, this

Ver. 12.

is

is to give ſparingly, but we muſt follow the *Theſſalonians* who were forward according to their ability, and rather beyond it; though one man cannot ſupply the wants of all, yet each muſt open his hand ſo that all together may bring things to ſuch an equality, that he *that gathered little may have no lacke*, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, yea if the time be hard, and great need lie upon the brethren, then we muſt practiſe our Lords advice, and *ſell and give almes*, as we reade that the

Luke 12. 33.

Acts 2. 45. & 4.34.

the beleevers did in the beginning of the Gospell at *Ierusalem*, who sold their possessions and laid the money at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made, as every one had need, and so it came to passe that none of them wanted. The praise of giving in this kinde is that it be a liberall gift, as S. *Paul* calleth it, with blessings and not sparingly, an abundant gift is with blessings, with blessings to God from the receiver, and blessings from God to the giver, therefore covetous-

vetouſneſſe muſt not meaſure out the gift, but it muſt be riches of liberality. A more particular rule for the quantity of giving I cannot name, and if our hearts be upright this is ſufficient, and the Lord in not appointing for every man a more particular quantity, doth but trie the naturallneſſe of our love as Saint *Paul* ſpeaketh.

Now for the manner of giving, it muſt be given cheerefully, freely, willingly, and of a ready minde, as Saint *Paul* tells us, *That God loves a cheerefull* 2 Cor. 9. 7

full giver, and ſaith, *if there be firſt a willing mind a man is accepted, which have begun not to doe alone, but to be forward or willing.* A forwardneſſe, willingneſſe and promptneſſe of the minde is required by the Apoſtle, as waters come out of the fountaine, as light commeth from the Sunne, what good things are done out of an habit of vertue, muſt be and will be done gladly, the ſoule contents it ſelfe in them, and doth them with delight and alacrity, this willingneſſe is a proofe that

2 Cor. 8. 10, 11, 12.

that we count it no losse so to give but a gaine, that we doe it as a man that soweth Corne, which rejoyceth to have the opportunity of sowing, because he knoweth the end shall be advantage, the worke will recompence it selfe, then is it the naturallnesse of love, for what things operate according to their owne nature, they doe it freely, as a stone goes easily downeward, but upward it goes by force and compulsion, what is wrested out by importunity and ear-

neſtneſſe, as a thing compelled can ſcarce be called a gift, and this is the firſt rule for the manner of giving.

2. The ſecond is, you muſt give conſtantly, *to ſeven and alſo to eight*, as *Salomon* ſaith, even ſo often as the neceſſities of the Saints require, for the Apoſtle ſaith, *diſtributing to the neceſſities of the Saints*, he doth not ſay diſtribute but *diſtributing*, uſing the participle, which noteth a continued act of diſtribution, ſo ſaith Saint *Paul* of the Philippians, *You ſent once* Phil, 4. 16

and

and againe, to my neceſsity, a well head, or a ſpring runnes with a conſtant ſtreame and will not bee drie, ſo ſhould mercifull deeds flow from us, how elſe doe we abound in this grace! he that gives but ſeldome, abounds not in giving, no more then hee that ſeldome prayes and heares, abounds in praying or hearing, *being inriched in all things to all bountie*, which cauſeth through us thankes-giving to God, and that you *having alwaies all-ſufficiencie in all things, may*

2 Cor. 9. 11.

Ver. 8.

abound in every good worke, this abundance cannot be without a constant ſtreame in giving. Saint *Paul* treateth chiefly of workes of mercy, when he bids us not to be weary of well-doing. We muſt not wax weary of giving no more then men doe of ſowing, ſo long as ſeed time laſteth ſo long will there be caſting in ſeed, every day is our ſeeds time, (bleſſed be God we have ſo long a ſeeds time) our ſeed time laſteth ſo long as life laſteth, we have good ground, ſo long as our poore

poore man or woman liveth, that feares God at leaſt, ſo long as we have the poore with us (as we ſhall have alwaies) ſo long we muſt be doing good unto them, if our mercy muſt imitate Gods, ſure it muſt bee conſtant, for ſo is his to us-ward, indeed if wee give not conſtantly, we give not out of a true habit of mercy, for thoſe acts that doe flow from habits will offer themſelves upon every occaſion, and ſo you have the ſecond rule for manner of giving.

3. The laſt is, wee muſt give in an upright and ſincere manner, that is to ſay, not induced to it by ſiniſter and corrupt motives and ends, but by due and juſt motives and ends. For the truth and ſincerity of every action is taken from the inducement that leadeth unto it, and the end at which the agent aimeth in it; now the right and due motives to bounty, muſt be love to God, and man for Gods ſake, as Saint *Paul* telleth us, that *Charity is bountifull*, as alſo obedience to Gods com-

man-

mandements, and faith in Gods promiſes, theſe are the three moſt ſolid and powerfull motives to every good worke, by which we ought to bee ſwayed in the courſe of our lives, and ſo to this good work in particular, obedience, faith, love, for ſo the Apoſtle tells you, *You know the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, how that he being rich, was made poore for us that we,* &c. and ſaith *Iohn*, if *God ſo loved us, we ought alſo to love one another*, and hereby *perceive wee the love of God to us that he*

2 Cor. 8. 9

1 Iohn 4. 11.

1 John 3. 16.

laid downe his life for us, therefore wee ought to lay downe our lives (much more to give a part of our goods) for the brethren. But there be certaine corrupt and evill motives and ends, (for thoſe two termes note but the ſame thing in different reſpects) which we ſhould carefully remove from us.

The firſt is vaine-glory, to be ſeene of men, for then our Lord tells us we have received our reward, this is hypocriticall, phariſaicall, guilefull, a man ſerves ſinne in it,

it, not God, nor man, though it may profit the receiver, the givers ſoule ſhall be no whit advantaged by it, theſe thoughts of gaining the praiſe and eſteeme of men, are to be thruſt out of our mindes, that they may not pollute our mercifull deeds.

Another end and motive there is worſe then this, and that is a conceit of ſatisfying for ſin, or deſerving life eternall, this is to make our deeds ſtand in ſteed of Chriſts obedience, of his ſufferings and righteouſneſſe,

this is to offer ſtrange incenſe to God, a thing deſerving cutting off in the old law, this is to over-value our deeds, and under-value Gods Iuſtice and kingdome; A ſuddaine oath or taunting terme or the like called veniall ſinnes, were not ſuch offences to the divine Majeſty, if the giving of a groate or ſhilling to a poore man might propitiate for them, heaven were an eaſie purchaſe and too cheape a penny-worth, if a man might buy it by giving almes, theſe fancies

cies do ſo putrifie works of mercy, that they become odious unto God, becauſe hee that doth them puts confidence in the fleſh, as Saint *Paul* cals it, and therfore cauſeth his almes to be but a worke of the fleſh, which kinde of worke cannot pleaſe God: J have done with rules of mercy, I goe to the next point and will give you ſome meanes of helping you to be mercifull.

Meanes to inable men to works of mercy.

That a man may give, he muſt have money to give, and he muſt have an heart, hee muſt have a will,

will, and he must have a gift too, for hee that hath nothing cannot give though hee would, hee that wants a heart cannot give, because he will not, both therefore are requisite, and I will shew you what must be done for the getting of both, and because the heart is the more needfull of the twaine as I suppose, I will begin there, hearken my beloved Brethren, I will shew you how you must work your hearts to a mercifull liberality, to that end you must doe these three things. 1. You

1. You muſt ſeriouſly conſider of thoſe commandements, promiſes, and threats, which are found in Gods Booke concerning this duty, preſſing them upon your ſelves, get into thy cloſet, ſearch the Bible, turne to the precepts to this duty, and ſay, is not mercy plainely, often, earneſtly required? and ſhall I dare to diſobey ſo many evident and urgent precepts? Why doe I come to Church, if for faſhion ſake, then I am an hypocrite, if becauſe God bids me, doth not

not he that ſaid heare the Word, ſay give to the poore: and if conſcience binde me to the one, doth it not binde me to the other? ſay to thy ſelfe, ſhall I dare to live in the manifeſt breach of ſo many cleere commandements, as doe enjoyne giving to the poore, I muſt not, I will not, I dare not, if I doe I ſhall give the divell ſo great advantage in the day of conflict, that I ſhall never bee able to eſcape grievous terrours, for he that keepes all the commandements and breaks one

one will be found a tranſgreſſor of all, and little will it availe me to have ſeemed religious if I be not mercifull, ſo the like in regard of promiſes and threats, urge them and preſſe them upon your ſelves, till you have even compelled your unwilling will, to reſolve to intereſt your ſelves into ſo many promiſes, and to ſhunne the danger of ſo many threats, if we would thus hide the Word of God in our hearts it would worke, I meane God by it would worke (for it is his

his Ordinance) even every grace in our hearts.

2. But to meditation you must add prayer, beseeching God to give you this so worthy a grace by which you shall be made so like unto himselfe, that you may know your selves to be his children, hereby saith our Saviour, *You shall bee knowne to bee my Disciples, if ye love one another*, and hereby shall we be knowne to love if we pittie and releeve, *Hereby wee know wee are translated from death to life, because we love*

John 13. 34.

1 Iohn 3. 14.

love the brethren, and hereby we know that we love the brethren, becauſe our hearts and hands are open to them, for love is bountifull; O Lord, ſay, implant mercy in my heart, O make me liberall of my money, as thou waſt of thy bloud. O let me have an heart to give out of my purſe to thoſe for whom thou gaveſt thy ſelfe a ranſome, inlarge my heart with Chriſtian charity and compaſſion, that I may be ready to give, willing to communicate; Thou that telleſt me, thy ſelfe

selfe art pleased with such sacrifices; O work in me that that is well pleasing in thy sight, and let me be pleased to offer such sacrifices as thou art pleased to accept; Thou gavest this grace to the *Thessalonians*, give it also to me, and cause this grace to abound in me; The spirit of God will hearken to our supplications and worke these vertues in us if we seeke them from heaven, and then indeed be these graces worthy the name of graces, when a man hath gotten them by calling

ling on God for them as the fruit of his Spirit.

But yet another thing must be added to meditation and prayer, and that is practise.

3. A man must begin to give, that he may get an habite of giving and presse himselfe to bee much in doing a good worke, till he have made it easie and delightfull to himselfe, you know what great perfection practise doth bring to them that were but very bunglers at the first, the most niggardly spirited man or woman in the world,

world, if they will ſet themſelves to croſſe their baſe mindes and churliſh thoughts, and ſay well I will be no longer a niggard, I will lay up ſomething for Chriſts members and good workes, and ſo open his hand the next occaſion that comes, to bountie, and ſo againe and againe, ſhall at length finde as great a promptneſſe to it, as he found a backwardneſſe before, you muſt offer violence to your uncharitable hearts, and exerciſe your ſelves in giving, and that will at laſt

laſt make you free in giving. I have ſhewed you how to get an heart; Now I will tell you how you muſt get ſomething to give, and that muſt be done by three other things.

1. You muſt uſe diligence. 2. Thrift. And 3. You muſt lay up ſomething in ſtore for mercy.

Firſt then, he that would bee mercifull to the poore, muſt be diligent in his calling and in the labours thereof, the diligent hand will make rich, and ſo provide matter

ter for bountie, Saint *Paul* wiſheth, *Epheſ.* 4. 20. *To labour with the hands the thing that is good that they may have to give,* this is one end that wee muſt propound to our ſelves in the worke of our vocation that God may ſo bleſſe us, not alone that we may have enough for our ſelves, but get ſome overplus too, for the releefe of others, but a ſluggard can never give, he will be like an empty pitcher or barrell, he that cannot put his hand to his owne mouth, how ſhould hee

put

put it to anothers mouth! Be you therefore painefull that God may prosper you and may repleniſh you with good things, that you may communicate them to others.

Secondly, thrift muſt be as it were the purveyor for liberality.

Thrift is due ſaving from ſinfull and needleſſe expences. Oh how much might our ability be for mercy, if wee would carefully cut off ſuperfluities, the veſſell that runneth out unduly willbe empty when men come

come to draw out of it, ſo will the ſtate be if we let it leake as it were a cracked or broken veſſell.

You will aske me from what muſt I ſave?

I anſwer, from riot, luxury, drunkenneſſe, gaming and ſuch ſinfull expences, by which men ſerve the divell and the fleſh, from needleſſe journies and contentious ſutes in law from exceſſe in workes of kindneſſe, from exceſſe in attire, feaſting, houſhold-ſtuffe and the like, and why my Brethren ſhould you not

not be willing a little to take off from your owne ſuperfluities to helpe others wants, and denie your ſelves of that which is much more then enough, to adminiſter to them that have leſſe then enough, ſure the Lord did not give you riches to play the *Diveſes* and pamper your ſelves, but to act the part of good *Iobs*, and make the poore mans backe and belly to bleſſe you, I confeſſe the Lord allowes you to enjoy the liberall portion he gives you, and you may lawfully doe it, but

he commands you to give to the needy, and why ſhould you not doe that alſo, either you have enough for both or not, if you have, why doe you not performe both, if not, why doe you not cut off the leſſe worthy expences for the more worthy? Therefore let your care be to look that nothing be waſted or miſpent, that there may be enough for ſo profitable a ſervice, how much might be ſaved from idle curteſies, from over fine fare and garments, and how abundant might

we

we be then in works of mercy, and yet be never a whit the poorer at the yeares end, but the laſt thing to make a man able to deeds of mercy is,

3. He muſt lay in ſtore for mercy, he muſt have a poore mans boxe in his houſe; when *David* minded to build an houſe for God, he provided all things before hand in abundance, ſo muſt we lay up materialls for the building of mercy, that we may not be to ſeeke at the time of uſing, this courſe Saint *Paul* preſcribeth to the

Corinthians, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1. and ſaid that he had taken the like order with the Church of the *Galatians*, *Let every one lay in ſtore by himſelfe as God hath proſpered him, that there may be no gathering when I come.* He that hath ſomething lying by him which he did ſequeſter for mercy, will give with a free heart, but it will come hardly if nothing be provided for it, if you aske me how much you muſt lay aſide, I anſwer, Be ſure you do it in convenient abundance, rather with the more then the

the leſſe. And I ſuppoſe it is a quantity that may well be ſpared of moſt men, the tenth of their commings in for pious uſes, ſo ſhall one be ſure he is rich in good works, and that he hath done as much this way, as in ordinary times God requireth of him, for the Iewes had the poore mans tithes as well as the Levites, But try this way firſt, caſt aſide thy tenth penny, and if thou findeſt Gods bleſſing ſo liberall that thou canſt well ſpare it, give it ſtill, if not according as thou art pro-

ſpered. Beloved, now I have ſhewed you how you may fit your hearts and your hands for this much commended ſervice of mercy, let me go on to remoove thoſe excuſes by which men are wont to hinder themſelves from mercy, and as it is in my Text, *to hide their eyes.* Thoſe are taken from foure heads: firſt, from others, ſecondly, from themſelves, thirdly, from the poore, fourthly, from the effects they thinke will follow of ſuch giving.

Objections againſt giving anſwered.

First,

1. Objectiõ from others.

First, from others, they alledge they give as much as others doe of their eſtate, and perhaps more, well, let us ſee how this reaſon runnes: I muſt doe as my neighbours do, now they give not ſo much, therefore need not I. Brethren, for the proportion, who taught you to make mens example the rules of your lives, the Scripture never wiſheth you to live by example but by rule, you ſwarve from the right rule when you looke abroad what others doe, God bids

Anſw.

thee give after thine ability, not after thy neighbours niggardlines, moſt men are backward and ſparing this way, but the niggardiſe of one is no excuſe for that of another. And againe, how knoweſt thou that thou giveſt as much as others of thy meanes, doſt thou know all that they give: doe they acquaint thee with their whole bounty: They may give much that thou heareſt not of, be not ſo uncharitable as to count them vaine-glorious, that will give nothing but in pub-

like,

like, a man may eaſily deceive himſelfe with this reaſoning: but other excuſes are taken from a mans ſelfe, and theſe are principally five.

2. Objections from a mans ſelfe

Ob. 1. Firſt, I doe not know, that they be ſo poore and in ſuch need, To this I anſwer.

Sol. Firſt, many a man muſt tell a flat untruth in ſo ſaying, for he doth know if he would heed the neceſſity of his neighbours, it is evident unto him if he would not forget, therfore to ſuch men I muſt apply that of *Salomon* in another caſe, *If thou*

ſaiſt I know it not, doth not God ponder the hearts, doth not he know it? Pro.24.12. Can you mocke God with pretending ignorance.

Secondly, if you know it not, is it not for want of enquiring, and ſeeking to know, how comes it you are ſo inquiſitive of other things that nothing can eſcape you, and here you be ſo careleſſe of enquiring, that you know nothing: So it is often your fault not to know, and one fault cannot excuſe another. A ſecond excuſe is,

I have little enough for my ſelfe and mine, let us ſee alſo how this reaſon is framed, he that hath little enough for himſelfe muſt not give to others, ſo have I; To anſwer it, he that hath but two coats may think he hath little enough for himſelfe, yet God bids him part with one to thoſe that have none, you ſee that this will not ſerve for a good excuſe. Secondly, how comes it that thou thinkeſt ſo much but little enough for thy ſelfe, is not this a vice of ſelfe-love, that will

Ob. 2.

Sol.

will not know what is enough, if thy great abundance bee little enough for thee, canſt thou thinke ſo ſhort a pittance as thy brother hath much enough for him; thou haſt variety of food, divers pounds or hundreds by the yeare, he hath ſcarce any thing, and muſt you alledge, I have little enough, hee that is all for himſelfe counts all little enough, if wee had charity wee would thinke if ſo much be but ſufficient for us, O how far is ſo little from ſufficing him, this objection

ction ſavours too ſtrongly of being lovers of our owne ſelves, to bee accepted with God. But now another objection.

Ob. 3. I muſt provide for my owne family, and maintaine my children, ſo thou reaſoneſt thus, hee that muſt provide for and maintaine his owne, muſt not give, but ſo muſt I, therefore if the propoſition be true, then none muſt give; for all are bound to ſuch proviſion; But certainely the ſame God that bids thee provide for thine and maintaine thine, bids thee

Sol.

thee give too, therefore thou muſt doe both, and thou muſt provide for both, and not ſtrive to doe the one in ſo over large a meaſure as to omit the other altogether, ſave from vanity and thou ſhalt have ſufficient for both uſes, provide moderately for thine own, and thou ſhalt have ſufficient for the poore alſo. Another objection.

*ob.*4. I have not wherwithall to be ſtill giving, I cannot ſpare it: ſo the reaſon goes, he that hath not to give is not bound to

to give, but I have it not.

Sol. To this I anſwer, the propoſition is true, but the aſſumption in moſt is moſt falſe, and I will prove it ſo too, for have you for fine clothes, fine fare and all other things, and have you it not for mercy, ſuppoſe by miſchance thy hat ſhould be loſt, hadſt thou not to buy another? Yes. Why then, how canſt thou ſay thou haſt it not to releeve a poore man? ſome may ſay, but if I ſhould looſe againe and againe, I ſhould have nothing at length to ſupply my ſelfe.

ſelfe. I anſwer, It may be ſo, but thou maiſt give ſo moderately, as ſtill to have ſome to give, ſo this excuſe is frivolous. The laſt excuſe is,

Ob.5. I doe give enough according to mine eſtate, and why ſhould you preſſe me to more.

Sol. I anſwer, if this were true, it were a good anſwer, but in moſt I will convince it to be falſe. How may we know whether we have given enough? compare thine expences for mercy, with thoſe of ſuperfluities in kindneſſes,

neſſes, in clothes, *&c.* they are farre inferiour, thoſe of mercy are nothing in compariſon of the other, certainely this ought not to be, for God bids *feaſt the poore, not the rich,* that is, rather then the rich, wherefore in doing ſo much leſſe for mercy, then curteſie, thou makeſt it evident that thou doſt not enough for mercy, yea, but my place requires ſo much, I anſwer, and doth not thy place require riches in mercy as well as in clothes and other things, know therefore, that

that untill thou art as abundant in deeds of mercy, as other things leſſe neceſſary, God will not thinke thee to have done enough, and what will it availe thee then, if thou make thy ſelfe beleeve thou haſt done enough. Now objections come from the poore.

3 Objections from the poore.

Ob. 1. They be unthankfull.

Sol. I anſwer, all are not ſo, give to them therefore that bee thankfull.

Secondly, one mans fault muſt not diſpence with another mans duty, thou art unthankfull to God

God yet he gives, ſo muſt thou.

And laſtly, take heed thou doſt not cauſeleſly accuſe them of unthankfullneſſe which thou canſt not prove.

Yea but they be idle, and bring poverty upon themſelves by their idleneſſe and waſtfullneſſe. *Ob.2.*

I anſwer, haſt thou before admoniſhed them of it? if not here is a fault, unſeaſonably to mention their evills to excuſe thy ſelfe from doing thy duty, and not to ſpeake of it fitly, to do them good. *Sol.*

Againe, if thou canſt not prove

prove this, then thou art a ſlanderer as well as a niggard, and here be two faults in one.

Ob. 3. Yea but they be ſuch as have wronged me.

Sol. I anſwer, to chooſe give to ſuch, for ſo ſhalt thou ſhew more charity, and have a greater reward, for we are commanded to feed a hungry enemy & have a bleſſing promiſed for it in ſpeciall; and this is to imitate God, who loved us when we were his enemies: now the laſt objections are from the effects of ſo giving.

4 Objections from the effects of giving.

If

If I be ſtill giving I ſhall give all away. *Ob.* 1.

I anſwer, what a folly is it to bee thus daſhing upon extremes, what canſt thou not give unleſſe thou give all away, if thou wouldſt uſe thy underſtanding for giving as well as for other things, thou maiſt give liberally, and yet keepe enough behind too, thou canſt give to the rich, and not give all away, why not then to the poore, thou canſt ſpend in other things, and not ſpend all away, why haſt thou not ſo much diſcre- *Sol.*

tion

tion for this expence, here we bewray meere wilfullneſſe in taking up fond and falſe objections. A man may be very bountifull and yet reſerve ſufficient for all other good uſes too, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *That*

2 Cor. 9. 8 *having all ſufficiencie in all things, you may abound in every good worke, for God is able to make all grace to abound to you.*

Ob. Laſtly, if I give ſo much away, I ſhall never be rich.

Sol. I anſwer, here is an excuſe worſe then the fault, for here is a charging

ging God with flat falſe-hood, he ſaith, *give and thou ſhalt not want*, thou ſaiſt I ſhall want if I give, he ſaith, *hee that giveth ſhall be bleſſed*, thou ſaiſt, he ſhall not, he ſaith, *he that watereth ſhall be made fat*, thou ſaiſt, he ſhall be made leane, he ſaith, *hee will repay it*, thou ſaiſt he will not repay it. Is not this an horrible preſumption to impute falſehood to God? and then this objection ariſeth from a principle moſt abominable, *viz.* this, what I cannot bee rich if I doe, that I will not

not doe, Why? muſt not Gods commandements be obeyed if they will keepe thee from riches, doth he not ſay, *labour not to be rich*, and doth not he ſay, *he is not worthy of mee that will not looſe all for my ſake*, ſo thou muſt be ready to doe what God bids, though it would keepe thee from riches, for what if we be not rich, what hurt is that? wee may be ſaved though we be not rich, but if wee will not doe our duty we cannot be ſaved. Beſides, if thou beeſt not rich in the

the world, thou ſhalt bee rich in good workes and that is the beſt riches. I cannot bethink myſelf of other objections, but that they may all be reſolved into theſe: O now hide not your eyes with theſe frivolous excuſes: but for all this the niggardly heart will grumble out, Why ſhould I give my goods that I have gotten with hard labour to another? *Ob.* I anſwer thee, not thy labour but Gods bleſſing hath given thee this abundance, and becauſe he that bleſſed thee bids thee give, therefore *Sol.*

I thou

thou ſhouldeſt give, but to make thee ſee why thou ſhouldſt give, I will ſet thee downe Motives enough to giving.

Motives to give.

Firſt, doth not God give to all richly to enjoy? why ſhouldſt not thou imitate thy Father & be bountifull like him?

Secondly, from thy ſelfe, art not thou a ſteward? and why ſhouldſt not thou beſtow thy Maſters wealth after his commandement? mayeſt not thou thy ſelfe need, and wouldſt thou not in thy need be releeved? why ſhouldſt not thou know

know it reaſon, to do to others as thou wouldſt have them do to thee: why ſhouldſt not thou ſow ſuch a crop as thou wouldſt reape?

Thirdly, from them to whom thou ſhouldſt give, are they not brethren to thee, ſonnes and daughters to God, hath not he tyed them to thee by many bonds, the ſame God made & preſerveth them, the ſame Saviour redeemed them, they have the ſame faith, the ſame ſpirit, the ſame baptiſme, head, and wilt not thou ſee reaſon to give to

them that are ſo neere thee?

And fourthly, from thy wealth, is it not uncertaine and fickle? why then ſhouldſt thou not do good with it whilſt thou haſt it, for when it is gone, nothing will comfort thee but the remembrance of the good thou haſt employed it in, as we ſee in *Iobs* caſe.

But laſtly, conſider the fruit of this giving, and it cannot but winne thee to giving, for it is of all the things in which we may beſtow our goods the moſt advantagious, it doth

doth the greateſt good, extending to the moſt & greateſt things, and in the largeſt meaſure. It doth good to the ſoule for the preſent, in miniſtring an aſſured argument of uprightneſſe and ſo of unſpeakable comfort, chiefly in the day of temptation, this giving aſſures the conſcience before God as Saint *Iohn* ſaith, ſo can no other expending. It doth good to the name, procuring more honour to ones ſelfe, and more honour to ones Religion, then all the fine clothes in the world, and

all the gay buildings, thoſe doe not prove a man good, mercifull, charitable, this doth; it doth the greateſt good to the ſtate, for it is a ſowing that will bring in harveſt, it will ſecure from wants, which no riches can doe. It doth the greateſt good to the ſeed, for they ſhall enjoy the bleſſing, yea it doth all theſe things too, in the greateſt quantity, for to no other giving are halfe ſo many promiſes made, and our good ſhall be according to Gods promiſes. It doth good for longeſt con-

continuance, for it doth good after death. The money ſo beſtowed ſhall follow one, yea it ſhall follow him at the reſurrection, for then ſhall theſe expences bee remembred, praiſed, rewarded. It doth good with moſt eaſe, for here needs no toiling, no great labouring, ſweating as in other things, for God will bring the fruit to our hands by a ſecret bleſſing (as he maketh the corne to grow whē it is ſowed) whilſt men ſleep & do other things, not thinking of it, yea it doth all this with

with moſt aſſurance, one cannot looſe this gaine for God is the aſſurer, & if we will live by faith, here is no hazard at all, he that hath Gods word cannot looſe his reward. Loe now ſtore of reaſons, and thoſe cleare, & thoſe weighty, to perſwade you. O Brethren be perſwaded, bee perſwaded, get this bleſſing, get ſecurity againſt wāts, ruſh not upon many curſes, what ſhal I ſay more? the Lord bade *Moſes* ſpeake to the rocke, and it gave water, will you bee harder then rockes? he com-

commanded the cloudes to ſend downe Manna, will you be rebellious above the ſenceleſſe cloudes? yea he bade the ravens bring bread and fleſh to *Eliah*, will you be worſe then theſe ravenous foules? O now powre downe ſhowres of bounty upon your needy brethren, and God will powre downe ſhowres of bleſſings upon you. Brethren be not forgetfull hearers but doers of the worke that you may bee bleſſed in your deeds. Give that you may never want, hide not your eyes

that

that you may not inherit many curſes, I require you to be doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your owne ſelves.

3. Uſe of comfort.

And this if any amongſt you heretofore have done, or hereafter will do, to them we muſt ſpeake a word of incouragement, aſſuring them that they ſhall find God true, *they ſhall not want*. Their ſeeds-time ſhall bring in harveſt, God will bleſſe their ſeed ſowne, hee will inrich them to all bounty, God will performe his promiſe

miſe to them and to their ſeed. Whoſoever will give liberally to the poore, that is, beſtow as much in mercifull expences as in workes of ſuperfluity, and kindneſſe, here he hath Gods word, *he ſhall not want*, let him acknowledge the ſufficiency and faithfullneſſe of God, and goe away aſſured, that the Lord will abundantly ſupply all his needs according to the riches of his grace in Chriſt.

FINIS.